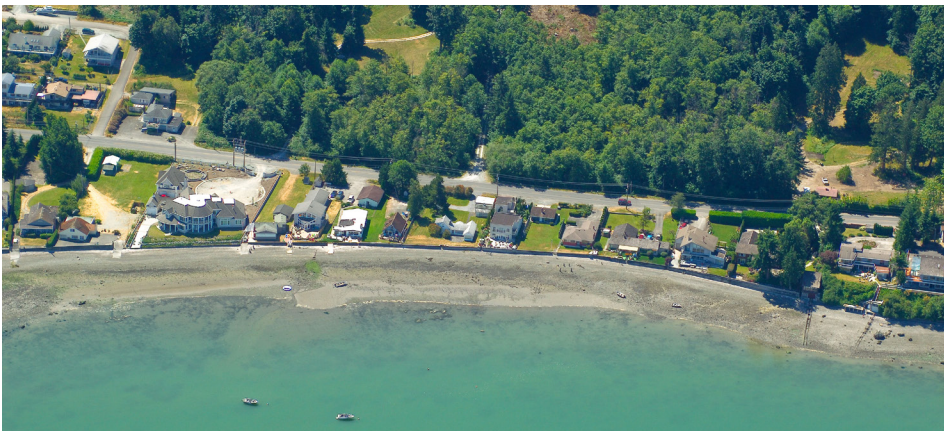




Shoreline Residential

Guidance for Shoreline Buffers and Setbacks within the Shoreline Residential Environment



Utsalady Beach shoreline

Your shoreline property is located within the Shoreline Residential (SR) environment, one of six environments included in the County's shoreline regulations (SMP). The Shoreline Residential environment is assigned to 14% of shoreline jurisdiction across Whidbey and Camano Islands.

Purpose of the Shoreline Residential (SR) Designation

This designation is assigned primarily to areas that are already relatively highly developed residential plats with existing development close to the shoreline, and properties are generally characterized by planned residential development along shorelines. The SR designation includes two subdesignations: SR – Canal Community (SRCC) and SR – Historic Beach Community (SRHBC).

SRCC Subdesignation

The communities of Lagoon Point, Sandy Hook, and Mariners' Cove are discrete residential communities developed along engineered canals. The locations and boundaries of the canal communities are designated on official shoreline maps to be kept in the office of the Island County Planning & Community Development Department.



Mariner's Cove, example of SRCC shoreline

SRHBC Subdesignation

Limited areas within the shoreline of Island County that have been platted in a dense pattern with small lots relative to other areas of the County. The existing marine waterfront lots are developed with residential structures constructed thirty feet (30') or less from the ordinary high water mark and were established prior to the SMA.

Overall, the primary function of the SR designation is to allow for residential development and moderate-to high-impact recreational uses in appropriate areas of the shoreline. Allowed uses will reflect historic development patterns with consideration for normal shoreline ecological functions.



Madrona Beach on Camano Island, example of SRHBC shoreline

Shoreline Buffer and Setback Requirements

Shoreline Residential (SR)

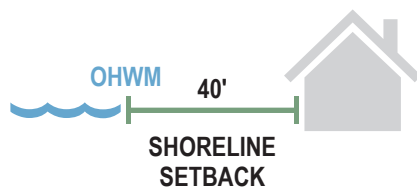
Areas waterward of OHWM are designated Aquatic, with unique use allowances and guidelines.



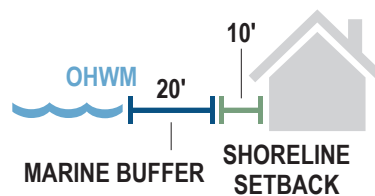
To protect shoreline ecological functions, scenic quality, and public safety, the new SMP establishes minimum shoreline buffers and setbacks for all shorelines. The system of buffers and setbacks varies by environment designation, so this guidance is specific to your shoreline property.

SR SUBDESIGNATIONS

Canal Community (SRCC)



Historic Beach Community (SRHBC)



A narrower shoreline buffer—or in the case of SRCC communities, no shoreline buffer—is required for the SRCC and SRHBC subdesignations. Existing development patterns in these areas have substantially impacted natural conditions, and there is very little potential for future buffer improvement while allowing for ongoing residential use of these properties.

Where can I build?

New residential development, including principal structures, additions, and all associated impervious surfaces, must be landward of the shoreline buffer plus the building setback, except for limited allowances, or with the approval of a shoreline variance permit.

When development is proposed on a site where the buffer doesn't include native vegetation throughout, the owner is required to enhance the buffer with native plants. As a general guideline, for development outside of any required setback or buffer, the percentage of the buffer to be enhanced should equal the percentage increase in impervious lot coverage on the site (in addition to buffer enhancement required for buffer or setback modifications described below).

Why is it important that I maintain a shoreline buffer?

Shoreline buffers provide multiple ecological benefits: they filter polluted run-off, help stabilize shoreline slopes and banks, and provide organic material to terrestrial and aquatic food-webs. Buffers also provide shade and habitat for critical fish and wildlife species.

Are there any allowances for property improvements within the shoreline buffer?

Most new development is prohibited and native vegetation within shoreline buffers must be maintained in a predominately undisturbed, undeveloped and well-vegetated condition. That said, the SMP does provide allowances for trails and structures necessary to provide access to the shoreline:

- A trail up to five feet in width (minimum length necessary to provide access)
- Beach access structures (see separate guidance regarding Beach Access Structures)

Note: If an existing bulkhead is removed and replaced with soft shore stabilization, the standard shoreline buffer on the same property may be reduced. See separate guidance **Shoreline Erosion and Bank Stabilization**.

What development is allowed within the shoreline setback?

Upon approval from Island County, the following residential development may be allowed in the shoreline setback without a shoreline variance:

- Impervious surfaces that do not cover more than 20% of the building setback area;
- Structures less than 30" in height;
- A single garden or storage structure over 30" in height as an accessory to a single-family home (limited to 200 square feet and a maximum height of 12')
- Limited expansions of existing principal residences and associated impervious surfaces under specific circumstances (including exhaustion of lot utilization outside of the buffer, setbacks and other features, and limitations on allowed building footprint).

What about maintenance or other changes to my existing home?

Normal maintenance and repair of legally-established residential structures within a newly-established shoreline buffer or setback is allowed. Any expansion, relocation, or ground disturbance (including changes to impervious surface) in a newly-established buffer or setback must adhere to today's SMP standards and additions.

Is landscaping in the shoreline area regulated?

In shoreline buffer areas, maintenance of existing, legally-established, non-native residential landscaping is allowed. Once the existing landscaping in the buffer is removed or the site is developed or redeveloped, vegetation in the buffer must adhere to new regulations. Under new regulations, removal of native vegetation must be avoided (unless approved by Island County), and when native removal is approved, it must be replaced with native vegetation. See separate guidance ***Vegetation Management***.